THE DEMOCRAT.

Published Every Friday Morning.
TILLMAN & PRICE, Proprietors.

VERSAILLES, : MISSOURI

THE LESSON OF THE LEAVES.

The autumn lay in glory on the slopin' of the hills—
All so fancy—red an' yellow, gold an' brown—
As if a mighty evenin' tide was settlin' o'er the rills,
An' the sun a-sheddin' lights a-goin' down.

Oh, the rustlin' of them leaves
As they fell from off the trees,
A-dancin' an' a prancin' to the music of the breeze;
An' our hearts a-keepin' time
To the laughin' of the rhyme—
A-listenin' to the rustlin' of them leaves.

With the glory round she whispered to me sayin' I was dear,
An' talked gentle-like an' pretty-like an' true,
'Bout our love bein' all bright colors like the mountains stretchin' near,
With the grace of God a-touchin' every hue.

Oh, the rustlin' of them leaves
As we walked among the trees,
A-blowin' an tip-toein' to the singin' of the breeze,
And we two fondly dreamin'
Of the days so sweet-like seemin'—
A-listenin' to the rustlin' of them leaves.

An' while the autumn on the hills was yet a-lookin' grand,
An' time so happy passin' quick along,
A shadow sudden 'peared to come an' cover all the land,
An fallin' on my heart put out its song.

Oh, the rustlin' of them leaves
As I prayed beneath the trees,
Begged the angels send a hope a-soundin' on the breeze;
As o'er my darlin' bendin'
I fought the death impendin'—
A-listenin' to the rustlin' of them leaves.

But when the day was growin' dim she said, low-like to me:
"I'm goin', love, 'long with the sunset tide;
A-crossin' of the Bar—its shimmerin's I see
An' the mornin' light upon the other side—"

Oh, the rustlin' of them leaves,
'Bove the graves beneath the trees,
Like whisperin's of a blessin' from a spirit in the breeze;
While from o'er the evenin' hill
Come the echo—"Peace, be still!"—
A-listenin' to the rustlin' of them leaves.
—Florence Bell Cochrane, in Leslie's Monthly.

THE BISHOP'S BEARD.

BY C. SEWELL.

"PARDON me," said the quiet man in the corner, suddenly, "I am about to make a singular request."

Dr. Bigworth, bishop of Steadminster, put down his paper and stared haughtily over his spectacles at his vis-a-vis. He made it a rule never to enter into conversation with strangers on a long railway journey. Generally speaking, he didn't even deign to notice their existence; but on this occasion he had remarked, with a feeling as much akin to irritation as his superior code permitted, that the man who sat opposite possessed a flowing beard of quite unusual length and extreme silkiness.

Now, Dr. Bigworth's solitary weakness happened to be pride in his beard—hence the animosity. It certainly was a singularly handsome one. Society papers devoted whole paragraphs to its honor. It had become as much a part of his personality as the collars, orchids and eye-glasses that are from time to time associated with other celebrities.

That a stranger—and a somewhat seedy stranger to boot—should presume to exhibit such a possession, too, was something in the nature of a liberty. No wonder, therefore, that the bishop had looked more severe and repressive than usual.

Truth to tell, he was not in the best of tempers that morning. He had risen at six and swallowed his coffee and egg hurriedly by gas-light, to the accompaniment of suppressed yawns from a very sleepy butler; and there is something so utterly lacking in dignity about a scrambled breakfast before seven!

But he had pressing business in London, and an early train to catch, so he had left Mrs. Bishop snoring peacefully, and had ensconced himself in the corner of an empty first-class, hoping—as there was no stop for two hours—for privacy. And then just at the last minute an apologetic guard had hustled in this man with the beard and slammed the door.

Naturally, when he ventured to speak, the bishop surveyed him with chilling disapproval.

"Indeed, sir?" he said, coldly, in reply to the intruder's remark. The man in the corner did not follow up his first observation for a moment or two. He took out his watch and looked at it. Then he raised his eyes.

"There's no stop for an hour and 50 minutes," he announced, politely. "May I point out to you, to save any subsequent misunderstanding, that you are some little distance from the communicating cord?" The bishop's stern grey eyes opened a little wider than usual, but he still preserved his composure, though an unpleasant sensation like the trickling of cold water made itself felt suddenly in the region of his pulse. "Have the goodness to explain yourself," he said, as stiffly as he could.

"Possibly you think I'm a lunatic?" suggested the man in the corner, playfully.

The bishop had his suspicions, but he didn't think it wise to give voice to them. "I have formed," he replied, in an icy tone, "no theories whatever about you. Be good enough to tell me if—if I can serve you, and permit me to go back to my paper."

A light—an ugly, crooked light—leaped all at once into the stranger's eyes; he stood up holding on to the hat-rack to steady himself.

"You can serve me," he said, in a low, vibrating voice. "How clever of you to think of it! I want your clothes."

"Sir," gasped the amazed divine, likewise standing up, "you must be—"

"Mad! I knew you'd say so. You're wrong, as it happens. However, that's quite beside the point. All you have to do is to undress."

Dr. Bigworth's cheeks went first grey and then purple. He was not used to any tone of authority except his own. Let this fellow be mad or sane, he must be taught his place. He swelled himself out to the full extent of his pompous size. "Are you aware who I am?" he demanded, in a voice that had been wont to make over-officious curates shake in their shoes.

"I have formed," coolly rejoined the man with the beard, "no theories whatever about you. Your dress will be useful to me, and that's all I care about." As he spoke he felt leisurely in his coat pocket, and then—as if there was nothing outrageous in the action—he produced a revolver and held it up to the window, pointing it and closing one eye as if to try its accuracy.

The bishop gave a smothered exclamation, and fell back limply in his corner of the carriage.

"This will tell you that I'm in earnest," said the stranger. "Now, when are you going to begin?"

"B-b-begin what?"

"To undress."

"M-m-my dear sir," remonstrated the unhappy prelate, abruptly dropping his dictatorial tone for one of extreme humility, "this—this must be some ridiculous j-jest."

By way of reply the stranger gently moved the weapon round till its muzzle was on a level with the episcopal brow. "Undress!" he repeated, in exactly the same tone.

With a groan of impotent terror the bishop took off his silk-lined overcoat and laid it on the seat beside him.

"Will that satisfy you?" he asked, nervously.

"Satisfy me? No!" roared his companion. "I want every stitch you have on—every stitch. Now, no more shilly-shallying; off with those gaiters!"

He advanced the weapon another hair's breadth nearer and fingered the trigger suggestively. With a spasmodic jerk his lordship bobbed down and hastily unbuttoned the insignia of his office.

"But you're not going to leave me without—without c-clothes?" he moaned. It was not yet eight o'clock, and the morning was chilly and raw.

The man with the beard did not reply in words, but with his disengaged hand he drew towards him a large traveling bag, dexterously undid it without moving his weapon, and whisked out in brisk succession a dirty flannel shirt, a pair of villainous plaid trousers, a pea-jacket, a scarlet handkerchief, and a rakish-looking billycock hat.

With a meaning gesture he pointed towards them.

Dr. Bigworth paused in his disrobing to look with horror-struck eyes at the obnoxious garments, and then entreatingly at his tormentor; but the man simply tapped his revolver impatiently and signified that he was in a hurry. With shaking fingers the bishop reluctantly took off his remaining clothes, and then very gingerly he picked up the loathsome things that the man had thrown down and proceeded to put them on. When he was dressed his companion surveyed him critically. Then he burst into a short, sinister laugh. "Capital!" he said. Again he plunged his disengaged hand into the bag, and brought out this time a small black leather case. "Your obedience deserves some reward," he observed, and opening the case he displayed to the blinking gaze of the half-stupefied bishop a pile of costly gems—mostly diamonds—that lay glistening inside.

"Now," he remarked, calmly, "you'll perceive why I am not anxious to be myself. Ten minutes more and I've done with you." He shut the case with a snap and pushed it down to the bottom of the bag.

"For Heaven's sake, what next?" demanded Dr. Bigworth, in a terror-stricken tone.

"I'm going to shave you."

For a few moments there was a quivering silence, then the bishop gave a cry of absolute agony. He fell down on his knees and squirmed at the man's feet. "Not my beard," he begged; "for pity's sake, not my beard!"

"Nonsense," snapped the stranger, as with a quick movement he restored the revolver to his pocket and brought out a razor. "You've got your lucky stars to thank that I hold strangely superstitious views about murder or I shouldn't have taken all this trouble. I don't want to resort to extremes, but if you don't sit still——" He made an expressive gesture, first drawing the razor across his own throat and then throwing out his arms as if casting a heavy body out of the carriage door.

"But my beard!" cried the wretched bishop. "Think, if you shave me, I——" and then his voice failed; the crooked light in the man's eyes looked so ominous and the razor gleamed so sharply bright in the sunlight that for the first time in his 55 years he fell forward in a dead faint. * * * When he came to himself some time later the train was still buzzing and rocking through space and the whistle was shrieking cheerfully. He felt uncommonly sick and cold, and with frenzied haste he put his hands to his throat. His throat was still intact, but his beautiful beard—the envy of the whole bench of bishops—the theme of poets and journalists—was gone!

He turned his heavy eyes round the carriage. For the first moment he thought he was alone—then he had a misty impression that he had wakened up in another world and was looking at himself—for opposite to him reading his paper, with crossed legs and haughty demeanor, sat to all intents and purposes the bishop of Steadminster! He saw it all now. This villain, housebreaker diamond thief, or whatever he might be, had conceived this extraordinary daring plan for eluding justice. He would trade on his possession of a handsome beard to pass himself off as Dr. Bigworth, and so get free of the station—perhaps of London.

What was to be done? The real bishop lay back in his corner thinking out a plan of campaign. He would sit still till the train stopped—nothing was to be gained by argument—and give this audacious blackguard into charge before he had time to stir. He panted ruefully at his plaid trousers and rubbed his chin afresh. Of course, he must look odd, but there was sure to be some one on the train who would know their own bishop from a make-believe. Yes, it all depended on rapidity of action directly they had reached their journey's end. He edged a little nearer to the door. The pseudo-divine went on calmly reading, and seemed entirely unconscious that there was anyone else in the carriage.

At last the train dashed out of the open fields and in between rows of smoky houses; then it slackened and in a few minutes they had crawled into Paddington. Dr. Bigworth, with a sharp movement, put his hand over the door and clasped the handle with his fingers. "Fetch the guard," he whispered to a porter, who had come civilly up and said "Luggage, sir?" to his traveling companion. The porter only stared at him and suppressed a smile. But at that moment, as luck would have it, the guard chanced to pass. "Guard," cried Dr. Bigworth, excitedly, "I wish to give this fellow in charge. I am the bishop of Steadminster, though I am aware I don't look exactly like him at this moment. This villain has taken my clothes, threatened me, sha——"

At this point the guard, who had been exchanging hats with the false bishop at the end of the compartment, held up his hand.

"Quietly, my lord, quietly!" he said, turning round to wink at an inspector who stood close by. "Oh, yes, you're the bishop of Steadminster right enough. Now, just let this other gentleman get out of sight in a hurry—and then you can tell us all about it."

"But I am the bishop. I tell you—you fool," cried the exasperated divine; "ask anyone in the train who knows me—this man's an impostor."

The impostor meanwhile had quietly gathered up his bag and the bishop's traveling rug, and was engaged in putting on the bishop's hat. He bent across and whispered something rapidly into the guard's ear.

The guard touched his cap respectfully. "Yes, m'lord," he said, deferentially; "I hope he hasn't worried you much, m'lord?"

"Not at all—not at all," said the false bishop, in a patronizing tone. "If I weren't in such a desperate hurry I'd try to find the poor fellow's friends. I fear he's escaped from somewhere. Good-day."

And before his thunderstruck victim could attempt to recover from his amazement he had pushed past, hailed a hansom, and stepped into it. Seeing his tormentor escape, Dr. Bigworth dashed out and began to struggle furiously in his attempts to rush after him. The guard and four porters held him back. "He's a criminal, I tell you," he cried, in wild excitement; "a criminal flying from justice. He's got my keys and my pocket-book—and—and my beard; he's——"

By this time a large crowd had gathered, and a couple of policemen from outside, attracted by the uproar, proceeded to force their stately way to the center. "It's a strait weskit 'e wants, Bill," observed one of the bystanders to another; "thinks 'e's a bishop, do 'e?" "Now, yer riverence," advised a cheeky boy in the rear, "jest go along quiet with them gentlemen. They're a-going to take yer to Westminster Habbey."

The policemen closed upon him, and before the bishop could move again or even expostulate he felt two powerful arms round his chest, and a pair of hands in front seized his wrists and snapped on a couple of handcuffs. With a furious cry like that of a wild beast at bay he made a mighty effort to wrench himself free—something seemed to snap, the crowd swam before his eyes, and—and—— * * *

The man in the corner was still there, looking at him certainly, but with a look of frightened surprise. "I beg your pardon, sir," inquired the man in the corner, timidly, "did you speak?"

"No—no," said the bishop, confusedly. "No; I ought to apologize, I believe. I'm afraid—that is to say, I think I've been asleep." His hand stole to his chin fearfully. Joy of joys, his beard was still there, longer and silkier than ever! He breathed a huge sigh of relief, and then glanced quickly at his legs; they were encased in neat gaiters, just as they had been when he started. The man in the corner wore a seedy top-coat, and the bag at his side wouldn't have held anything bigger than an ordinary-sized cat.

Dr. Bigworth experienced a warm sensation of intense, radiant gratitude, such as he had never felt before; a new-born instinct of friendliness prompted him to do something for the man in the corner. He picked up his paper and held it out to him.

"You haven't seen this week's 'Saturday,' perhaps, sir?" he said, affectionately. "There's a capital article on 'The Psychology of Dreams.' * * * Oh, no, you're not depriving me—pray take it."—London Tit-Bits.

AN INFORMAL CALL.

Neighborly Affair in Which the New Comer's Cook Plays a Rather Important Part.

That a certain degree of formality is desirable is suggested by an amusing story from the Chicago News of a neighborly call. The far-reaching results of the visit can readily be imagined.

"Good evening," said the elderly woman, approaching the steps. "I see you are enjoying the fresh air. It's a [illegible] isn't it?"

"It is pleasant," responded the woman, who was sitting on the front steps.

"I don't believe you know me. I am Mrs. Baxter, your neighbor, two doors off. No, don't get up. I'll just sit down here beside you. Don't say a word now. I have intended to call ever since you moved in, but you know how it is. There's always something. And when I saw you come out and sit down I said to my husband, 'I'm just going to run over right now. If she thinks I'm informal I don't mind, because I am informal. I always was.' And he just laughed and told me to go ahead. He says he thinks he met your husband some years ago. How do you like your house? You needn't tell me, though, for I hardly suppose you've got used to it yet, and it's so discouraging getting settled; and then I saw Mrs. Thomas, your next-door neighbor on the other side, a day or two ago, and she tells me that you've been having awful trouble getting a servant. You needn't say anything. I know exactly what it is. I don't know what the girls are coming to. They don't seem to want to work, and they're most of them worthless when you do get one. I've had more——"

The other woman had twice made a movement as if to rise, but had been prevented by the detaining hand of the informal caller. This time, however, she got up.

"If you're wanting to see Mrs. Gossage, ma'am, you'll have to call again, for she's gone to the theayter and won't be back until late," she said, with cold dignity. "I ain't Mrs. Gossage myself, I'm the cook."

Some Slips.

It is a part of the seeming ill luck belonging to circumstance that an artist may spend time and genius on a piece of work, and then fail conspicuously in some detail.

There is a story that one Royal Academician gave a hand five fingers and a thumb, and that another painted a live lobster bright red.

The clever Goodall had been engaged in painting a number of laborers dragging a huge stone across the desert, and a mansof science, entering the studio, said to him:

"I say, Goodall, if you want those fellows to pull that stone, you must double their number. It would take just twice as many."

But it is not modern painters alone who slip up on points of accuracy. Even Albert Durer, in a scene representing Peter denying Christ, painted one of the Roman soldiers in the act of smoking. Turner put a rainbow beside the sun, and in another picture he got wofully tangled in the ship's rigging.—Youth's Companion.

HAS WILLIAM A CASE OF CANCER

Court Physicians Declare Their Patient's Condition Good.

EMINENT THROAT SPECIALIST

Declares the Public Concern About the Emperor Unwarranted, But the Fate of His Father and Mother Is Recalled.

Berlin, Nov. 10.—A bulletin concerning the condition of Emperor William, who was operated upon Saturday for the removal of a polypus from the larynx, was issued Monday morning at the new palace, Potsdam. It is as follows:

"Inflammation, which naturally follows as a reaction from the operation already is diminishing. We can, therefore, be satisfied with the appearance of the left vocal chord. Nevertheless, the healing of the little wound probably will require another week.

EMPEROR WILLIAM OF GERMANY.

"The emperor's general condition is good, his temperature and pulse are normal.

[Signed.] "VON LEUTHOLD.
"SCHMIDT.
"ILBERG."

The court circular states that the emperor, Monday morning, personally heard the report of Herr Von Lucanus, chief of the civil cabinet.

Prof. Bernard Fraenkel, the eminent specialist of Berlin university, in an interview with a press correspondent, said: "The public concern about the emperor's condition is unwarranted. The facts are absolutely as stated in this morning's bulletin. The people are only agitated because they remember that the first reports about Emperor Frederick did not disclose his true malady, but this time the bulletin is correct. You can reassure America."

THE HEREDITARY TAINT.

The Fate of Emperor William's Father and Mother Recalled.

New York, Nov. 10.—Information contained in a private dispatch received here shows that the operation on Emperor William is similar to the first one performed on his father, and consequently causes concern to his household. The official statement issued by the surgeons fail to reassure, because it is well understood that for reasons of state the emperor would be given the benefit of any doubt as to the true character of his disease.

It is recalled that the surgeons at that time made nothing of the first operation on Empeoror Frederick. There is anxiety because both Emperor Willam's father and mother died of cancer, and his grandmother, Augusta, also was so afflicted. The emperor's aunt, the grand duchess of Baden, as is well known in Germany, is suffering from the same malady.

It will take months to decide whether the fears now entertained are unfounded. At present the whole weight of scientific authority, which is in attendance upon the emperor, affirms that he has not cancer.

TOKENS OF SYMPATHY.

The Emperor Says It's Worth Being Ill to Receive Them.

Berlin, Nov. 10.—The story of the day concerning the emperor is not the story of the bulletins, of the telegrams from foreign sovereigns, nor of the sympathetic inquiries of the ambassadors, but of the regret and concern of the people.

"It is worth being ill to receive a thing like this," the emperor is reported as saying, when some chrysanthemums sent to him by three working women were handed to him.

Several similar indications of regard were made by poor persons at Potsdam.

The emperor makes light of his indisposition, and has asked the members of his family to act precisely as heretofore. He feels the change from his uncommonly active life to forced quiet, but he declines to be relieved altogether of the routine business of state, and received in audience the heads of his private cabinet and the chancellor, Count Von Buelow.